

The Wharfinger

**Newsletter of the
Herefordshire and
Gloucestershire
Canal Trust**



**Edition 69 • Spring 2001
50p – free to members**

WHO DOES WHAT . . .

Working together, in the present, to revive the past, and secure a better future ©

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Chairman of CofM

Will Frecknall

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Nigel Bailey, Jane Jones

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Cliff Penny

**Postmasters:- Leader
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D & M Gray, S McManus*

Talks/Walks

Nigel Jefferies, Nigel Bailey

Those in italics, above, are not Directors on the Council of Management, although they may be co-opted members

**THE TRADING COMPANY
H & G CANAL [SALES]**

H & G

**DONATING ALL PROFITS
TO THE CANAL TRUST**

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Derek Weaver, Dick Skeet.

BOATS:- Chairman Dick Skeet

Committee Ray & Barbara Moses, Pat Skeet

Those in italics are not Directors of the Trading Company although they may be co-opted members

HONORARY POSTS:-

SOLICITORS Sue Newbould, Gabb & Co., 25 King Street, Hereford.

ARCHAEOLOGIST Ron Shoesmith

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING Penny Environmental & Planning

FRONT COVER: Skew Bridge, Monkhide. Transformed by volunteers from a heavily overgrown muddy ditch.

FOLLOW THAT!

Someone said to me, following receipt of the last edition of **The Wharfinger**, 'how on earth are you going to follow that?' referring to the "Huge Success!" front page - with the splendid Carlton TV photo of the Opening Ceremony at Over. The answer is simple - the Grand Opening was of Over Wharf, Phase 1. Whilst it was a significant step for Over, and a very important one for the whole Canal, it was just that - a significant step forward; there's plenty more to do at Over - and elsewhere along the Canal!

One thing is certain, there has been a very noticeable 'Over effect'. Fantastic publicity, six weeks of peak time television exposure and many thousands of people hearing about the Canal - and the work of the H&G Canal Trust for the first time. Perhaps of even greater importance, however, are the many people holding positions of influence, both locally and nationally, who have known all about the Canal and the Canal Trust for years - *they have now seen what we really are capable of!*

So how *do* we follow that? There are those who say "*phew - lets have a bit of a rest.*" Whilst very tempting - that's not the right answer! We have to harness the 'Over effect' and ensure that the greatly increased interest in the H&G Canal, and the voluntary work of the Canal Trust, is maintained, nurtured and built into the sustained level that is required to guarantee ongoing successes leading to our ultimate objective. In the spirit of our motto, working *together*, we need others to continue to work in partnership with us volunteers to ensure the successes of the future.

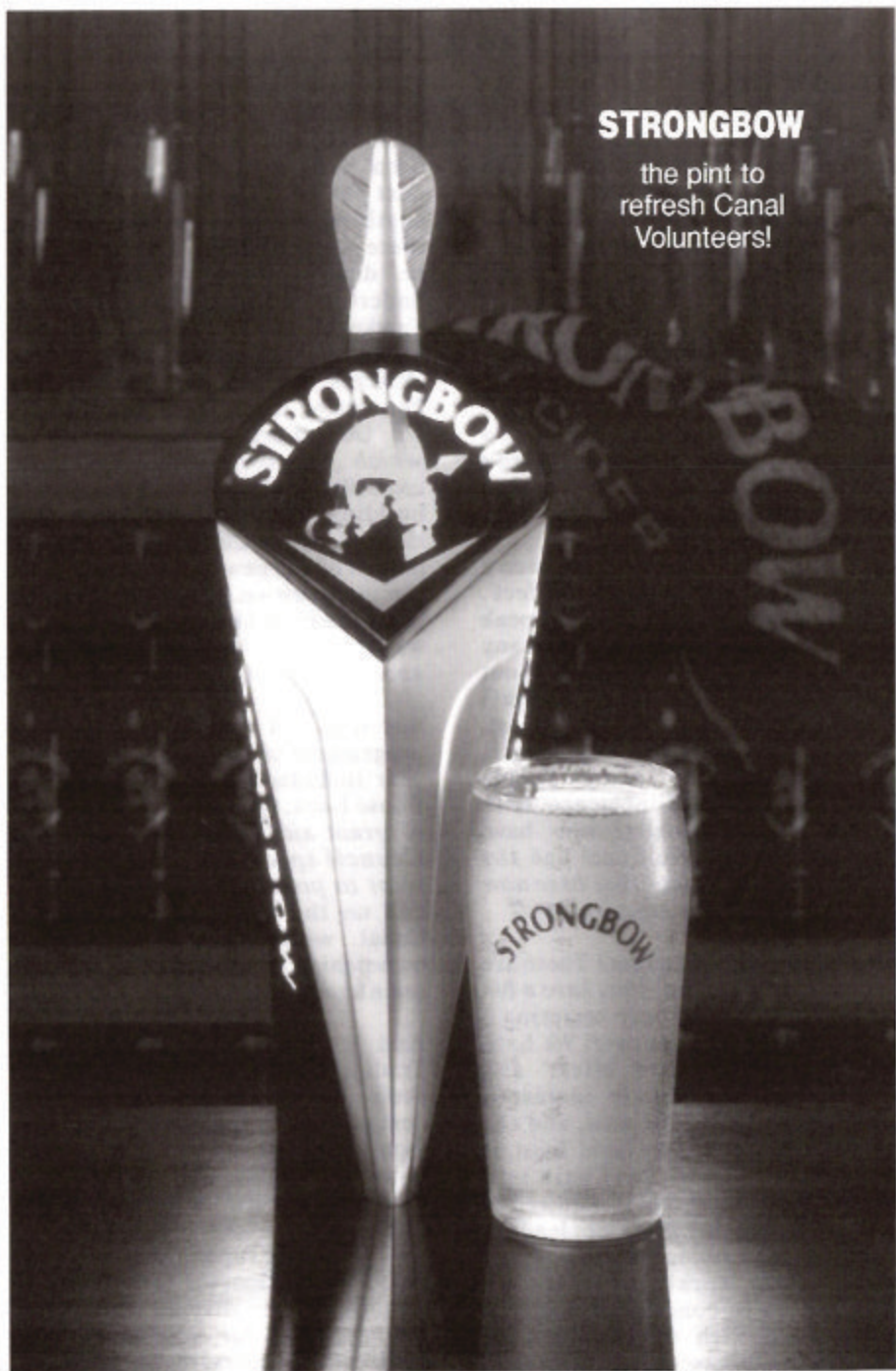
Elsewhere in this edition of **The Wharfinger**, you will see that our various behind the scenes teams have been hard at work organising the next phases at Over. As usual, before anything happens on the ground, there is much administrative work to be done and negotiations to be undertaken. Just before Christmas, **Tewkesbury Borough Council's** Planning Committee delegated to Officers the granting of Planning Permission for the demolition of the old Over Lock Cottage (*much of which was built after the Canal closed!*) and the approval for the new building to be built by **Swan Hill Homes** for the Canal Trust. Further details of the new building will be in the next edition. Once the shell has been completed by **Swan Hill Homes** we then have the challenge (*yes, another one!*) of fitting it out...

But it is not just Over. The busy programme of work for the coming year includes the ongoing work on House Lock, Oxenhall (*another £500 of grant aid from Forest of Dean Council specifically for this as we went to press - thank you FoDDC*), and on the adjacent length of the Canal within the Canal Trust's ownership - as well as routine maintenance elsewhere.

And its not just restoration. The Trading Company are not resting on their laurels either. There is a demanding programme of events, local and national, where our award winning display will be taken to continue to raise awareness of the Canal and the work of the Trust - as well as raising funds from sales - *see p. 19*. In addition, the Over team are organising a diverse range of opportunities for you to see the continuing progress there - *see p. 27*.

STRONGBOW

the pint to
refresh Canal
Volunteers!



Editorial

EDITOR OF THE WHARFINGER

I have been Editor, in one form or another, for over 9 years - some 35 editions in total. Last autumn I advised the CofM that I wished to stand down after this edition; the sheer amount of time taken to edit and produce each edition being considerably in excess of the 'spare' time available. I was asked to reconsider, and in doing so analysed what was actually involved. It was considerably in excess of what might be regarded as a true Editors role!

Producing everything as paired up pages camera ready for the printers - including editing contributions to fit the page and to maintain the 'house style'; writing about half of the magazine; seeking advertisers; designing advertisements; invoicing and (in some cases) 'chasing' for advertising payment; maintaining all of the circulation databases (bar Members records); printing all the labels for each edition; liaising with the printers and with our postal team - it all adds up to a workload that, with a busy day job and another voluntary role for the Canal Trust - was completely untenable.

It has been hard work but great fun. During the period I have seen the cover transformed twice (thanks to hard work by others) and have had the personal satisfaction - as someone with no publishing experience whatsoever - of developing a newsletter of some 24 pages (with a print run of hundreds) to a small magazine of 36 pages (or more) and a print run of 1,500. As costs (understandably) increased it was also gratifying to receive support from advertisers, local and national, to help balance the accounts.

However, the increasing strength of abilities within our Membership has come to the rescue! From the Summer edition (number 70) I will have a small but vital team doing a great deal of the work behind the scenes - to those who volunteered - thank you. *The full credits will be in the next issue.* Provided this all works as intended then you will have to put up with me as Editor for a bit longer...

ADVERTISING

Having just mentioned our advertisers a further comment. We exchange newsletters with other Canal Societies/Trusts and one Editor, not a million miles from here, recently stated that he didn't intend to litter their publication with advertisements. Now we have taken a clear view on what we do; the inclusion of advertisements has helped us to justify increasing the print run of *The Wharfinger*, and increase the number of pages, whilst maintaining a professionally printed publication at a time of unprecedented expenditure.

We consider that the inclusion of the advertisements is yet another indication to readers of the increasing support that the Canal Trust receives from businesses large and small - after all *The Wharfinger* is our ambassador and the image it presents, both in content and visual appearance is vital. Finally, whilst on my 'hobby horse', can I stress that we have gone to great lengths to ensure that the inclusion of advertisements was not at the loss of editorial content - if you check your earlier issues you will see that the news, views, photographs etc. has steadily grown!

■ CRP

IMPORTANT; PLEASE READ - Foot & Mouth

As a responsible organisation we will be reacting to the latest news and advice about the sad spread of foot and mouth disease.

Until the current outbreak is formally declared over by the Government we would request that you do not walk in the countryside - *innocently travelling to look at the Canal could spread this virus.*

If you want to look at the Canal then please visit the Over site on one of the Open Days or special events - *full*

details are on page 27 - please don't go elsewhere along the line of the Canal until the outbreak is formally declared to be over.

We hope that the 'all clear' will be given prior to the planned Walk + Picnic starting from Over on the 12th May (*details on page 26*). Please do book now - Liz Bailey 01452 533 835 has all the details - should there be any need to postpone the walk then Liz will advise you of revised arrangements nearer the time. *Thank you.*



The book

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It has been our pleasure in supporting the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust for over 6 years, and we will continue to *work together in the present, to revive the past, and secure a better future.*

For further details please contact Simon Hayward -
Tel: 01452 700384
Fax: 01452 700740



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Grand *HOLIDAY* Draw!

As usual, the Canal Trust have been very fortunate with the prizes for this year. The first prize has been very generously donated by our friends from **Starline Narrowboats**, Ian and Pauline Cundy. The second prize is a self catering holiday in West Herefordshire, donated by **Mrs A. Wood**, the third prize, B&B in a timber framed farmhouse, has been donated by **Mrs Helen Parker** and **MEBnpower**® have again sponsored our ticket printing costs. Our thanks also to **Waterways World** for once more donating a years subscription to the person selling the most tickets.

What this all means is that the money from every ticket sold goes directly towards further restoration on the H&G Canal.

To our prize donors and our sponsors we offer our sincere thanks for your generosity. We hope that in the years to come you will be able to look at the canal as the restored lengths increase and, with us, be proud of what has been achieved. To members and friends who buy **Grand Holiday Draw Tickets**, we thank you in anticipation and wish you individually good luck, when the winning tickets are drawn.

The Draw, this year, will take place at the annual **National Waterways Festival**, which is being held at Milton Keynes, the winning tickets being drawn on the last afternoon of the festival.

If you would like more tickets than we send out, please contact Janet Moults, tel: 01432-264 366 or e-mail her on Janet.Moults@ukgateway.net

We do hope you will all buy (and sell!) our **Grand Holiday Draw** tickets - it is not every day one is offered the chance to win a holiday for 25p per ticket (or in such a glorious part of England either!)

Please come and visit us at Milton Keynes and see our latest Display. You can also meet members of The Trading Company and have a look at our Sales Stand. *Thank you.*

Brian Moults - Chairman of The Trading Company.

* We appreciate that some recipients are not prepared to buy or sell draw tickets - we apologise but we do not have the resources to be selective in who receives tickets. *There is no obligation to return unsold tickets.*

** In order to save costs we have not included tickets in copies of The Wharfinger sent to Councillors, Local Authorities etc. If you wish to support us please contact Janet Moults on 01432 264 366 and she will be delighted to send you some tickets. *Thank you.*

Would you like a **FREE**
twelve months subscription to
Waterways World magazine?

That's the prize that we are giving to the H&G Canal Trust Member who sells the most **Grand Holiday Draw** tickets between now and the **National Waterways Festival** at the end of August.
(If you already subscribe your subscription will be extended by 12 months.)

Rules: 1) Return all the sold ticket stubs and the money IN ONE ENVELOPE to the Honorary Treasurer by 18th August 2001 - multiple submissions are not acceptable.
2) In the unlikely event of a tie the winner will be the first drawn out of a hat.
3) To participate you must be a paid up Member (any class of Membership).

The winner will be announced in The Wharfinger.

Our thanks to **Waterways World**
for sponsoring this prize.

Corporate Spotlight

Last year we warmly welcomed Eign Enterprises as Life Corporate Members; owners of Left Bank Village (sponsors of our acclaimed colour leaflet about the Canal) and Castle House Hotel. Dr Albert Heijn's vision for a better future for Hereford is rapidly turning into reality. His objectives have much in common with ours for the restoration of the Canal.

Focus on Hereford's Riverside

According to many residents and visitors, the £4 million **Left Bank Village** development adjacent to the Old Wye Bridge is *"the best thing that has happened to Hereford during the last decade"*. It all started with Dr Albert Heijn's vision of a place on the banks of the River Wye where people can sit back and relax. His boyhood memories of playing by the riverside near his Netherlands home gave him the inspiration and vision to create opportunities for people to benefit from such a wonderful local amenity: the River Wye.

The **Left Bank Village** restaurant complex was built with the ultimate aim to enhance the river frontage and transform a forgotten area of the city into a vibrant complex for shopping, dining and for leisure purposes. Links with the river are clearly reflected in the names of the restaurants within the complex: **Floodgates Brasserie**, **La Rive** fine dining and **The River Terrace** for conferences and weddings. Moreover, the river view blends in perfectly with the external terraces of the restaurant complex, which have been designed to step down towards the river.

But the *"riverside vision that became a reality"* does not end with the completion of the **Left Bank Village** development. More long-term plans include the

development of the former 22-acre Causeway Farm site on the other side of the river. **Asda** and **Left Bank Village** owners **Eign Enterprises** have submitted plans to Herefordshire Council to create a new district, retail and community centre for South Wye, which will be anchored by an **ASDA** superstore. The proposal also includes plans for a **Heritage Centre**, based on the River Wye and Hereford itself, and a canoe club close to the riverbanks, allowing canoeists easy access to the water.

The developers behind this £50 million regeneration scheme, who have made allowances for making the site flood free in their own costings, are also planning to give £2 million to help prevent flooding within Hereford. The money will go to the Environment Agency and will be used to devise a citywide flood prevention scheme.

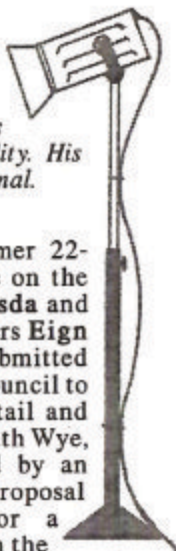
Anthony Davies, Managing Director of **Eign Enterprises**, said: *"By ensuring that the River Wye is controlled through the city of Hereford, we hope to create a vibrant riverside - one that helps the regeneration of the city through the creation of jobs, the sustainable development of tourism and an enhanced quality of life for those who live in Hereford"*.

■ ZP

Left Bank Village

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THE YEAR 2001

AA ★★★★★ RAC ★★★★★

Yet Another Winner!

Every year there are three lucky winners in our *Grand Holiday Draw*. Second prize last year was our biannual *'Two VIP tickets to the London International Boat Show 2001 + Top Hotel'* courtesy of show organisers **British Marine Industries Federation**. Member **Tim Boddington** was the lucky winner and, by the sound of his report, he and his wife thoroughly enjoyed themselves...

Living in Cheshire, a trip to London is at once an exciting opportunity and a dread for the travel requirements. Having spent 30 years in regular occupation of a first class railway seat between Macclesfield and Euston that would certainly be my first choice. However, with the present deranged service and the suspension of cheap tickets, I could see this prize turning out to be very expensive indeed! I needn't have worried. Thea and I went by car on the 3rd of January before the world went back to work after the Christmas sojourn and hey presto! there was hardly another vehicle on the road and we drove into London, and out again the following day, without a single stop.

We went 'up West' for the evening - nice dinner and a hilarious film (*Meet the Parents*) - and stayed in the **Kensington Hilton** courtesy of our sponsors, **British Marine Industries Federation/Big Blue** (organisers of the London and Southampton Boat Shows).

In the morning we made full use of the buffet breakfast before trotting off to Earls Court. It was the first day of the show - review day - *ticket only*, with the emphasis on media (TV cameras everywhere), the City (no doubt looking to see where their money should be invested), and plenty of serious sailors. This is surely the best possible day to visit, everyone keen and interested, no

pushing and shoving, everything fresh and clean.

We located the IWA stand (but they didn't have my Macclesfield guide on sale!) and spotted well known canal boat builder Peter Nicholls. He was selling, and I quote, *"all steel round bilge fast cruising yachts for serious blue water sailing"*. Have I missed something - are these for Tixall wide? Seriously though, there were a lot of very beautiful boats magnificently fitted out. But there's no pleasing everyone - Thea says she didn't see anything worth a second look at under a million pounds! *We quickly moved on*. One boat that might well get a second look from the trailable department is the 'clam boat'. This smart all-plastic boat can be sailed, powered or rowed. It is folded in half for towing, has retractable wheels and can be stored on end in just over a square metre.

This show always has vast numbers of interesting stands promoting the bits and pieces that are necessary for every kind of waterway activity and much of this is important to inland boaters. From every variety of sanitary facility to cookers and fridges, anchors and flotation jackets. Even a device for making toast on a gas hob.

This was a splendid day out and we much enjoyed it. Thanks very much indeed to Audrey Smith for drawing my ticket!

Your chance to win a holiday and support the voluntary work of the H&G Canal Trust - see page 5.

Trading Company Diary - Year 2000 - Part 3

Our Trading Company Chairman, Brian Moul, concludes his summary of the promotional and sales activities during last year - just in time to start again!

This report, the third and final chapter of the efforts of the Sales Team, dealing with the last two venues of our Trading Year 2000. All the way through last year, we seem to have been battling with the weather in one form or another and our last two diary entries were no exception.

October 29th-Oxenhall Open Day; centring on the village hall for display, Sales, refreshments and the starting point for guided tours of the interesting bits! The team were on duty bright and early to set up everything. The weather of course was anything but, with the forecast of worse things to come. The early visitors, I think, included some that missed the postponement

“the tour leaders were seen huddled in a corner drawing straws!”
notices in September. They wanted the tour, so Brian Fox got himself suitably ‘toggled up’ and led off this intrepid band of enthusiasts to Oxenhall Lock, where he proudly showed off the efforts of his Tuesday Work Party, otherwise known as The Wrinklies.

(Rumour has it that the average age of the team is actually reducing! Does the mud at Oxenhall contain some hitherto unknown ingredient to promote this effect?) By the time Brian returned, the promised heavy rain had arrived and he retired to the refreshment area to fortify himself with tea and cake. Understandably, most of the visitors, and there were quite a fair number, were quite happy to inspect the displays, buy items from the Sales Stall and take their ease with refreshments, which pleased everybody, not least the tour guides. Only one more guided tour was requested during the afternoon

and the tour leaders were seen huddled in a corner drawing straws! Notwithstanding the weather, a very good result was achieved and we all went home well satisfied, if a little damp from loading the vehicles in a downpour.

November 18th-Ledbury Craft Fair. Once again, this event was held in St. Katherine's Hall. Contact with prospective stall holders was, as usual, carried out by Joyce Potts. On the day, the Sales Team, arriving AGAIN bright and early, only just got tables laid out before the stall holders arrived. Local residents were inspecting the “goings on” even before the official opening time, which boded well for the day to come. Our optimism was fully justified, as prospective customers were continually arriving to spend money at one stall or another, as well as buying tea and cake.

One very pleasing aspect of Trading Company sales was the interest in the produce from our woodworkers, David Mordant and David Jones, who had provided a veritable treasure of potential Christmas presents. Foremost of these were a rocking llama (*NO-not a rocking horse, a rocking llama*) and wood cased pens. Not many of the wooden items remained unsold for long and we ended the day with very respectable totals for Sales and Refreshments.

As you read this last episode of The Trading Company Diary, plans are already under way for 2001. The Organising Committee are girding

Trading Company Diary - Year 2000 - Part 3

themselves for the year ahead. Having produced such good results for the year 2000, we have set ourselves a hefty target.

For the statistically minded, and expanding on some of the information provided in the winter edition of **The Wharfinger**, I give below the volunteer person-hours donated in order to achieve excellent sales figures for the 2000 Trading Year:-

Venues visited	21
Days spent	42
Person Hours	700 plus

In this new trading year of 2001, we hope to be visiting new places, as well as some of our regular events.

The National Waterways Festival this year is at Milton Keynes and we would really appreciate some extra help here to spread the load. During last year new volunteers did come forward and were warmly welcomed.

Please, PLEASE come and join our happy band of helpers. All you need on the Sales Stand is a happy smile - the rest comes easily.

Don't forget that not all of our helpers come from the two counties, some travel a distance to be with us *and we are truly grateful.*

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If anyone has any books no longer required, or duplicates, we would be very pleased to sell them to boost our fundraising. No magazines, please!

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Committee Matters

Three Council of Management meetings are reviewed by our Editor in order that our Members and supporters are kept up to date...

OCTOBER COMMITTEE

- The recommendation of the Finance Committee for the Budget period December to February was approved.

- Our Treasurer reported an anonymous donation of £500, which was greatly appreciated.

- The question of voluntary registration for VAT purposes was again being reviewed.

- A generally very favourable report was presented on the Grand Opening Celebrations for Over Wharf (Phase 1).

- It was agreed that each role within the Council of Management would be the subject of a job description. There would then be a review of posts vacant - and of the workload of existing post holders.

- Detailed reports on plans and progress were received from the Over SPG and the Trading Company.

NOVEMBER COMMITTEE

- Brian Fox reported on his ongoing negotiations with The Highways Agency in respect of the Nursery Site at Newent following our success in getting the site withdrawn from auction last year [see *Mr Prescott Saves The Day* page 35 of edition 67]. Their professional advisers were insisting in valuing the land as if there was no Policy in place to protect the line of the Canal. It was agreed that our Planning Team would ask Forest of Dean District Council

to confirm the protection of the route of the Canal at this point.

- The recommended budget for the years 2001/2002 were approved after debate. Limited income expectations had led to the need to reduce the restoration budget.

- The Over SPG had revised their programme of work to reflect reduced funding and priorities had been assigned.

- Good progress was reported with the Planning Application (prepared and submitted by Swan Hill Homes) for the replacement building for the Canal Trust at Over.

- Work on House Lock, Oxenhall was being restricted by the availability of suitable stone - plans were in hand in this regard. Our Depot at Horsefair Wharf had now been extended in accordance with the Planning Permission.

- The future of our Social Evenings was debated. Janet Moulton agreed to prepare a programme for the next 12 months and this was warmly welcomed.

- It was agreed that Nigel Bailey should be invited to serve on the CofM as a co-opted member. The CofM would consider the suggestion of the formation of Branches at a future meeting.

- Proposals to form a Middle England Canals Association were noted. This would apparently be along similar lines to the Northern Canals Association and the Southern

Committee Matters . . . (ii)

Canals Association (of which the H&GCT was a member) and fulfil a similar role in the central area of the country. As no one was free to attend the inaugural meeting it was agreed that apologies should be given with the request that we be kept informed of developments.

▪ Cliff Penny announced that, reluctantly, he wished to retire from his role as Editor of *The Wharfinger* after edition 69; he was willing to serve as supervising Editor for the next few issues.

▪ The Trading Company Boat Group reported that further work was required to our boat at Over (Mr Maysey) and a budget of £250 had been agreed. It was agreed that Over SPG would liaise with the Trading Company to ensure availability of

the boat and display etc. at planned further Over Open Days [*details page 27*].

▪ A former member of the CofM had suggested that the widely reported cost of £50,000 for the Over Phase 1 works was incorrect and the true cost was higher. It was agreed that this rounded figure had proved very effective as a press statement "A half million pound job done for 10% of the contractors cost." The relatively small difference was more than accounted for by the fact that Phase 1 costs included salvage of materials and associated costs that relate to future phases. The Treasurer would explain the figures to the individual concerned.

▪ Detailed Reports on progress were received from the Over SPG.

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Committee Matters . . . (iii)

These included a breakdown of actions and costs relating to the Over Phase 1 Celebrations, together with suggested improvements for future Opening Ceremonies; a review of the remaining Phases of the work; suggested fund-raising activities; arrangements for tree planting, bench manufacture and other aspects relating to our Sponsorship Appeal.

■ Cliff Penny had responded to a draft document on the Strategic Enhancement of the Inland Navigation Network from the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities. Strong objections had been raised to the fact that the INA Brief for this document specifically ignored canals that were not a through route - thus excluding the H&G Canal and the Montgomery Canal from the review!

■ Our Treasurer circulated extensive documentation relating to our *(ever extending and complex)* insurance arrangements.

■ Sponsorship for Over mooring rings, benches and trees continued at an excellent rate. This was warmly welcomed.

DECEMBER COMMITTEE

■ Our Planning Team reported that the Forest of Dean District Council had written and confirmed unequivocally that the line of the Canal through the Nursery Site at Newent was protected and that any future planning decisions in respect of the site would take this fully into account. It was agreed that Brian Fox would bring this to the attention of The Highways Agency and Diana

CHARACTER BOAT HIRE?



We don't pretend to have the latest 'state of the art' canal boats for hire, with the most modern accessories and gadgets. We do, however, operate a fleet of great variety and character, including interesting traditional style boats, some with boatman's cabins and traditional controls, comfortable semi-trads and cruisers. Sizes range from 2-12 berths.

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Committee Matters . . . (iv)

Organ MP in respect of the planned sale of the whole site.

■ Following the torrential rains Nigel Freeman, the owner of Lock Cottage, Oxenhall had requested that the top stop plank be removed to permit storm flows to pass down the Canal rather than the byweir run full bore. Pending the construction of a storm overflow weir this was agreed.

■ Cliff Penny reported that Member Maggie Jones was a professional graphic designer and had expressed an interest in taking over from him the actual production side of *The Wharfinger*. Heather Worth had agreed to take over advertising liaison and, subject to software compatibility, data base records. Tony Austin Bailey had agreed to produce Committee Matters. In view of these very considerable offers of assistance he was willing, as requested, to continue in the true role of Editor of *The Wharfinger* for the time being. The changes would apply as from edition 70, Summer 2001.

■ Members of the CoM were preparing their job descriptions for debate at a future meeting.

■ Some members of the CofM expressed their concern at the scale of operations that would be required to maintain the new buildings at Over. Over SPG reported that they were currently preparing Business Plans for consideration by the CofM early in 2001. This would enable informed decisions to be taken in order for grant aid applications to be completed in time for work to proceed.

■ Janet Moulst was preparing a list of possible sources of grant aid. It was agreed that applications needed to be prepared by those managing the specific project. There was a need to identify sources of funding for land purchase as swift action could well be necessary if land comes on the market.

■ Further extensive reports were received from the Over SPG.

■ The Trading Company report reviewed our own Ledbury Craft Fair (*very successful and our own wood work sales had been excellent*) and arrangements for future events throughout 2001 [see page 19]. Arrangements were well in hand for the *Grand Holiday Draw 2001* [see page 5].

■ CRP

Internet Sales !

Are you looking for that Birthday present or just a gift that is a little bit different?

Why not support the work of the Canal Trust and purchase from our Trading Company - who donate all proceeds direct to the H&G Canal Trust? *From a book, English pewter - to a cuddly toy - they have it!*

The Canal Trust's own web site now contains full details - *including colour photographs of many of the items.*

Visit www.h-g-canal.org.uk, to make your choice then 'phone our mail order sales co-ordinator Penny Shetliffe on 01432 820 623 to place your order. *Thank you.*

Dates For Your Diary

By Janet Moulton

Meetings hosted by our "Master of Ceremonies" Lloyd Jones

The Verzens was sold at the end of last year. New owner David Roberts is undertaking major refurbishment - he will welcome us back as from the APRIL meeting. Please note that the March meeting will be at Ashperton Village Hall - on the A417 less than 1½ miles towards Leominster from the Trumpet crossroads.

Social evenings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month *everyone welcome*, normally held at The Verzens Country House Hotel, Trumpet, nr. Ledbury - see map below.

All meetings are 7.30 for 8pm.

Tuesday, 20th March - Ashperton Village Hall

Settle & Carlisle Railway

David Alison will be our guide to what many regard as one of the most magnificent railway routes in the country. **NOTE VENUE!**

Tuesday, 17th April - The Verzens

Members slides

Many other canal societies and trusts have an annual 'Members slides' evening - so we decided to give it a try - please do bring some!

Tuesday, 15th May - The Verzens

Over & Over Again

Member Nigel Bailey will bring to life his fascinating book, *Over & Over Again* - 750 years of history at Over. Further details of the book are on page 4.

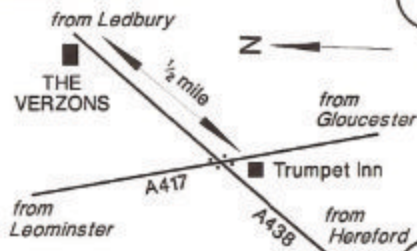
Advance Notice:

Annual General Meeting 2001 - Tuesday 19th June at the Verzens - further details are on page 28 of this edition.

Janet has gone to a lot of trouble to organise a superb range of Social Evenings - please support them - everyone welcome! Any queries, or ideas for speakers, to Janet on 01432 264 366

Our Social Evenings venue is the Verzens Country House Hotel... situated on the A438 Hereford to Ledbury road, half a mile on the Ledbury side of Trumpet crossroads (junction of the A438 with the A417).

A warm welcome, plenty of parking and approximately halfway along the Canal from Hereford to Gloucester.



Trading Company Away Days!

We are putting together a very busy programme of outings for the Trading Company for 2001 - both locally and nationally. *More details will appear in the next edition.*

Our "away venues" are:-

May 26-28: **Boatshow 2001** at Crick

Jun 29-Jul 1: **Inland Waterways Exhibition** at National Indoor Arena, Birmingham

Aug 24-27: **National Waterways Festival** at Milton Keynes.

Our volunteers at Over are seeking a small generator for occasional use on site - if you have one spare (*they are ever optimists!*) please contact David Penny - see **Contacts**.

We would appreciate any assistance at these events from any Members living in the area - and, of course, anyone willing to travel.

Please contact Janet Moulton for further details of how you can help - see **Contacts** (inside back cover).

These events are very important to keep the H&G profile prominent in the wider canal world *but* they do cost money to attend. If any Member - Corporate or Personal - would be willing to sponsor our attendance we would be very grateful. ■ JM

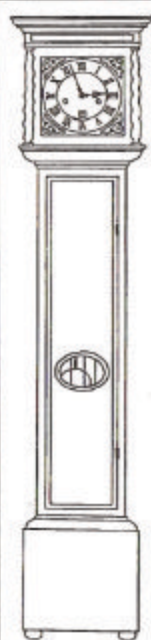
As (*hopefully*) the better weather approaches they also need a small gas refrigerator at Over - is there anyone out there who knows of one that could do with a good home, please?

Corporate Members

Visitors to the **Grand Opening Weekend** may have seen the first destroyer and sea-going tug to enter Over Basin - there in perfect miniature illustrating the skills of Gloucester & District Model Boat Club Members!

We are very pleased to welcome the Gloucester & District Model Boat Club as our latest Corporate Members. They hope to join us for most of the Open days at Over during 2001 [*dates are on p.27*] - so there will be further opportunities to see their skills.

Do you know a local Business, Group or Association who would support our wholly voluntary work by way of Corporate Membership? Please encourage them to join - *they will be made most welcome!*



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RESTORATION UPDATE

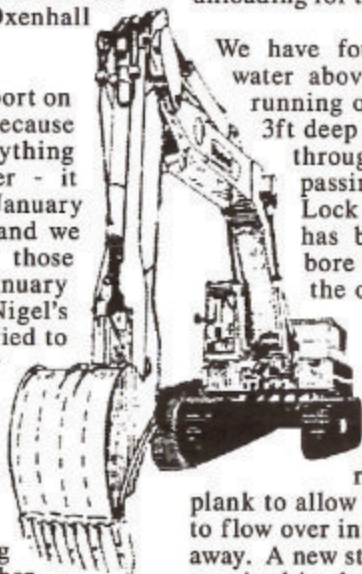
By Brian Fox, Nigel Bailey & David Penny

The news this time is dominated by the weather - or the rain to be precise. Plenty of water is what you want when you have a fully restored and operational canal but during restoration it can be a positive nuisance! I expect Nigel will be recounting tales of the boat moored at Over being in danger of floating down the Severn; and there are watery tales to tell at Oxenhall and Yarkhill.

I haven't got much to report on the actual work front because we didn't actually do anything right through December - it rained every Tuesday. January began with sharp frost and we can't lay stones in those conditions - but on January 16th we had one of Nigel's 'Momentous Days' and tried to make up the lost time by laying stones until it was too dark to see the level bubble. The miserable sequence is now continuing as I am writing this on a Tuesday afternoon having just dried out from another drenching this morning.

It is convenient in one way that progress has slowed because we are getting short of usable stone on site and are trying to arrange transport of stone which we have in abundance at Over and in Hereford. Here again the weather has thwarted our attempts as the stone so valiantly retrieved from the Lock Cottage by those strong lads on the Wednesday Crew has been about 6ft under water as the River Severn flooded (at least it should be washed clean when we do eventually get it!). The stone at

Hereford is from the old bridge on the Roman Road demolished 5 years ago and stored at Broomy Hill, courtesy of Welsh Water, ever since. Unfortunately, having arranged for it to be lifted onto a truck at that end I now find that Tom Bennett has stripped the brakes off our tractor at Oxenhall so there is no means of unloading for the moment.



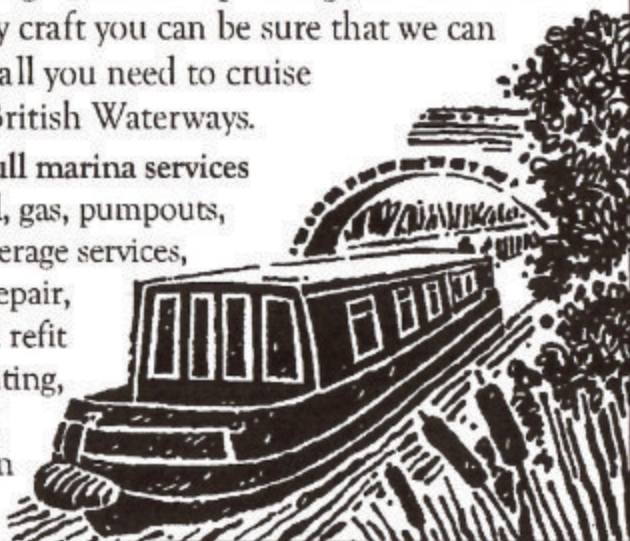
We have found that the excess water above the lock has been running over the byweir about 3ft deep and struggling to get through the 2ft culvert passing directly under Lock Cottage. The culvert has been running at full bore and Nigel Freeman, the owner, has been lying in bed listening to the roar of the water and wondering if his cottage will still be standing by the morning. We removed the top stop plank to allow the high water levels to flow over into the lock and safely away. A new storm overflow will be required in the future to limit peak flows retained in the canal during such intense rainfall. The cottage is still standing - as it has done for the last 160 years!

A few months ago I reported the ongoing partial restoration of the Coal Branch of the canal by Nigel Freeman, the owner of the land, where it curves round the field below Oxenhall Church. A new byweir was constructed, modelled on the original mentioned in the last paragraph, and the winter rains were awaited for the canal to fill up and for it all to work. Unfortunately the

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rain came and high water reached a point about a foot below the weir - and stopped! Water is now escaping over the bank and running down the field at a point just beyond where the restoration has been completed. It looks like a bit more work is required on that section before it will be restored to original depth.

Yarkhill has also suffered from excess rain. The leak in the bed, reported this time last year, has yet to be repaired. Water in the canal bed and surrounding fields won't dry out sufficiently for us to get in with machinery without causing damage. We are continuing with clearance of fallen timber and hope to complete that before the start of the nesting season in March - if not it will have to wait until the birds have safely left their nests.

A comprehensive programme of work has just been compiled for the next year at Oxenhall and maintenance at Yarkhill. This will not only include continuing work on the lock but the construction of a new overflow weir in the pound above the aqueduct. Other smaller jobs will need to be done around the compound and on the maintenance side. Volunteers are still coming forward (John Forrest has just joined from Hereford) but there will be plenty of work to keep them occupied and we can never have enough. As you can see a variety of jobs are available and skills needed, in bricklaying for instance, can soon be taught. Why not give it a try?

There is still nothing to report on the sale of the Nursery site at Newent. I do know that the

Highways Agency want to put the property, hopefully minus the land required for the canal, back on the market in the Spring but it would seem the wheels of Government turn exceeding slowly! I am continuing to monitor the situation and ensuring that our very supportive local MP, Diana Organ, is kept fully informed.

October saw a slackening of pace at Over after the frantic preparations for the Opening Weekend *reports Nigel Bailey*. A good deal of time was spent shifting materials back from the flood plain to the compound which had been cleared to make space for the marquees. This was just in the nick of time because the early November floods brought the Leadon and the Severn to within 6"

*“ one was
windsurfing
and two roaring
around on
jet skis! ”*

of overflowing the temporary dam. One Sunday morning, on playing fields near site, three locals were taking advantage of the extreme conditions - one was windsurfing and two roaring round on jet-skis!

A gift of several thousand daffodil bulbs from Somerset took us a day to plant beneath the canopy of the chestnut, under the direction of Maggie Jones, who made sure we planted at the right depth and 'pointy-end-up'. Roy was planting his bulbs in the shapes of letters so don't be surprised in the Spring if the bank reads "Roy woz ere!"

We also planted about 50 willow and alder cuttings along the house side of the Basin, from the end of The Wharf to the dam, to stabilise the bank. Willow cuttings put into wet soil should readily grow. As for the alder, we'll see.

The restored 'quadrant' at Oxenhall - the curved path that will run under the bottom Lock gate beam as described in Restoration Update - p. 23 of edition 67. (Brian Fox.)



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[2-5pm on Sunday 15th April]

Come and join us at Over Basin:-

Boat Rides *[Donation requested]*

Children's Easter Egg Challenge *[£1 per child]*

Afternoon Teas

All profits to Canal Trust funds.

Please do NOT park on site - see important note on the facing page.

Over Canal & River Walk and Picnic - Saturday 12th May

Nigel Bailey will again lead the walk that was so successful in October (*see "Something Completely Different!" on page 10 of the last edition of The Wharfinger*).

Depart from Over site at 11am prompt. Follow the line of the H&G Canal as much as possible to Rudford. Continue to Hartpury for the provided picnic. Return by way of the River Severn passing Maisemore Lock & Weir. Return to Over via Telford's Bridge about 4pm for a cup of tea.
[Approximately 8.5 miles]

£5 per adult, £3 children, to include picnic.

All profits to Canal Trust funds.

Advance booking is ESSENTIAL - details below.

Please wear suitable footwear and clothing for this walk!

**FOOT & MOUTH
RESTRICTIONS**

*Please see
page 4.*

Cheese & Wine Party Saturday 9th June 7.30pm

Join us at Over to enjoy a selection of locally grown wines and cordials and local cheeses - including the 1999 "Cheese of the Year".

You'll be surprised at the variety on offer!

£5 per adult, £3 children.

All profits to Canal Trust funds.

Advance booking is ESSENTIAL - details below.

Booking Information

*The ESSENTIAL advance tickets for the Walk and the Cheese & Wine Party can be obtained from Liz Bailey by sending a cheque (& SAE please) payable to H&GCT to:- Liz Bailey, 30 Fieldfare, Abbeydale, Gloucester, GL4 4WF
OR telephone Liz on 01452 533 835 and pay by credit card.*

Over Open Sundays

On the last Sunday of every month through to (and including) August there will be an Open Day at Over from 10am to 5pm.

An opportunity to have a guided tour, a trip on Mr Maysey (donations requested), and some home made refreshments.

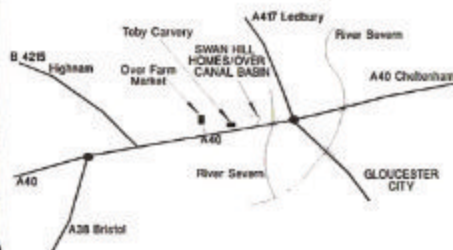
***Sunday 25th March; Sunday 29th April
Sunday 27th May; Sunday 24th June
Sunday 29th July; Sunday 26th August***

All profits to Canal Trust funds.

Please do NOT park on site - see important note below.

Car Parking at Over

IMPORTANT, please! The Canal Trust car park has not yet been built for visitors to the Over site; until it has been completed, later in the summer, PLEASE do NOT park on the Over site (disabled excepted).



We have made arrangements with the nearby **Over Farm Market** (thank you, yet again, Rob) for our visitors to park there. Please park on the extremities of the car park leaving plenty of room for customers to park closer to the shop. Your custom at the shop would also be appreciated! **Thank you.**

Over Events Diary

In addition to the events already mentioned on these two pages our hard-working Over publicity and fund-raising team have yet more ideas for the coming year - more details in a future edition:-

Saturday 14th July - Strawberry Fayre

Saturday 11th August - Alney Island Walk & BBQ

Sat/Sun 29/30th September - First Birthday Party

Sat/Sun 27/28th October - Halloween

Sunday 9th December - Boat trips to Santa's Grotto

AGM - 2001

FORMAL NOTICE OF 2001 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

To be held on Tuesday 19th June,
at The Verzons Country House Hotel, at 7.30pm.

This is the formal Notice of the 2001 AGM in order to give Members the opportunity to make a note in their diary. The Agenda and the Annual Report will be in the next Edition of The Wharfinger.

In accordance with the H&G Canal Trust's Articles and Memorandum of Association those members of the Council of Management who are retiring on rotation but offering themselves for re-election do not require to be formally nominated to serve an additional term. However, new nominations to serve on the Council of Management are welcomed and have to be made in writing, in a prescribed form.

Nominations must be submitted not less than 7 days nor more than 28 days prior to the AGM. The form is available from Liz Connors [see *Contacts on the inside rear cover*] to whom it should be returned *to arrive between 22nd May and 12th June.*

Every Member who is entitled to vote at an AGM may appoint a proxy to vote in his/her stead. A proxy must be someone entitled to vote at the meeting. Proxy forms will be available from Liz Connors from the 22nd May and must be completed, signed and returned to her *at least 48 hours prior to the commencement of the AGM.*


JOHNNY LUTHER

It is with great regret that we report the death of Johnny Luther (74) who was one of our stalwart Members from Newent. He had been actively involved in our canal restoration programme since about 1991 and only recently gave up work and stood down from his voluntary duties. He will be remembered especially for his expertise on plant in general but in particular for the work which he did for the Canal Trust with his own little red International bulldozer.

He always seemed to be in his element when he was operating that machine and his skill was well demonstrated in the finished job he did on the banks and towpaths at Oxenhall and Yarkhill. He was employed on the recent extension to the car park at Newent and one of the last jobs he did with the Trust was the construction of the new car park adjacent to the church at Oxenhall.

His skills on big machines were developed during the years he worked for the Forestry Commission and he apparently travelled the country taking his expertise with him. I don't think he spent all his time sitting in the comfort of a cab and must have done a lot of manual work too as he always seemed to me to be extremely fit - he is the only man I know who could swing start our dumper without releasing the decompression lever!

Johnny didn't say a lot but was quite happy to pass on his knowledge to anyone who showed an interest and many of the volunteers in the H&G have benefited from his experience.

The Canal Trust are pleased to have been associated with Johnny for the last 10 years and will be forever grateful for his participation as we tackle the challenges ahead. 

April Funds?

Sunday, 1st April, is a day when Ray & Barbara Moses will spend all day raising funds for the H&G Canal Trust at the annual Gloucester Boat and Watersports Jumble.

Held in Gloucester Docks, from 10am to 4pm, the £3 admission charge also gets you into the splendid National Waterways Museum. The 'Boat Jumble' comprises hundreds of stalls - including the one from H&G Canal Trust, selling all types of river, sea and canal items - both new and second hand. There is free car parking in special designated areas a short distance from the Docks.

Ray and Barbara would welcome donations of almost anything waterway related to sell - *but not waterways magazines*, thank you. Previous years have seen proceeds well into 3 figures; but the more items to sell the better the chance of yet another record being broken.

You can take items to the Settle & Carlisle Railway Social Event on 20th March (*please remember that this one is at Ashperton Village Hall*) or, if this is not convenient, please give Ray or Barbara a call - 01989 780 325.

THE HEREFORD & GLOUCESTER CANAL

by David Bick

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Membership Matters

April is the month when the largest number of our Subscriptions are due for renewal - it really is of immense assistance to the Canal Trust when Members renew promptly! So please, if your Membership is due on the 1st April [for details of how to check this - see page 12 of the last edition] why not write that cheque now rather than forget?

Also, have you ensured that we can claim back tax (*Income Tax, Capital Gains Tax*) by Gift Aiding your Membership? As a Registered Charity we can increase the value of each and every payment that you make *with minimal effort on your part*. Many Members have not yet advised Liz Connors of their wish to Gift Aid their Subscription - *it means so much to the Canal Trust*.

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Our appeal, in the last two editions, has been a huge success - to everyone concerned - our sincere thanks. All of the mooring rings, benches and the currently planned trees have been sponsored. However, there are still opportunities to sponsor a corner stone (details below).

A further list of sponsors will appear in the next edition.

SPONSOR A CORNER STONE

Please sponsor a Corner Stone for The Mill Barn at £25 each. These Cotswold coloured stones are larger than the rest of the stone that made up the barn and are a key feature of it - but not all survived from the original building. Each donors name will be recorded inside the building when completed - maximum 30 characters please.

Please send a cheque for the appropriate amount to our Treasurer Liz Connors, 18 St. Ethelbert Close, Sutton St. Nicholas, Hereford, HR1 3BF.

Please also enclose your full name & address (+ telephone number in case of queries) together with details of how you wish your donation to be recorded.

Thank you for your support.

Unless you state that you are not a tax payer, or that you do not wish us to do so, each donation will be accepted under the new Gift Aid rules [see page 8 of edition 67 of *The Wharfinger*.]

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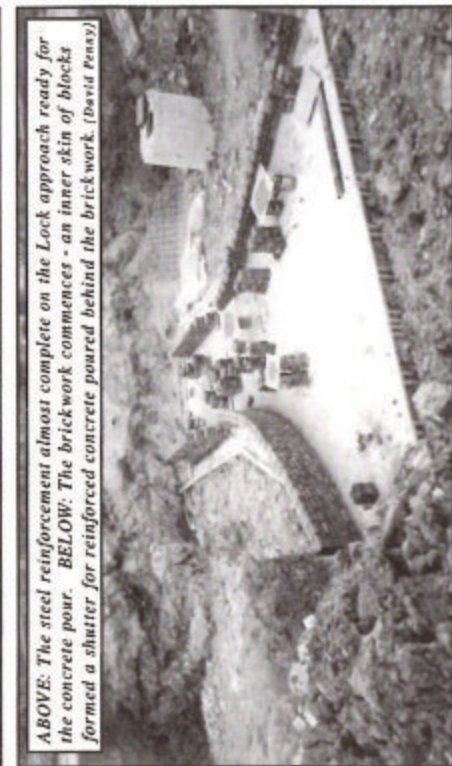
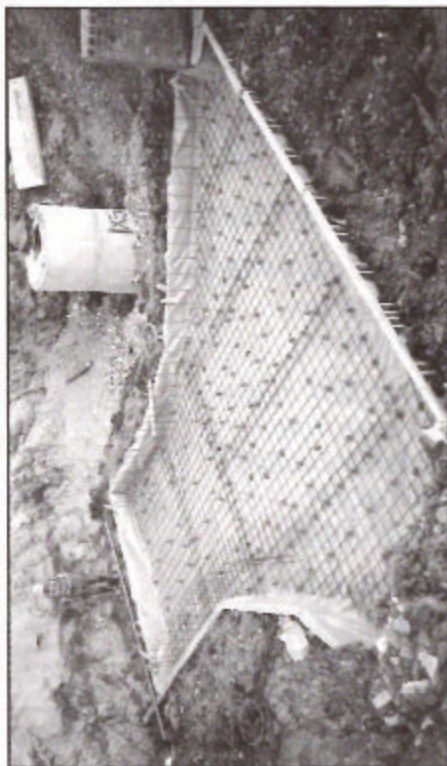
An unusual view from behind the Lock stop planks at Over. Due to pressure on space the construction of the curved approach was not covered in earlier editions. The work had to wait until Swan Hill laid their sewer across the Canal. Also see p.33. (David Penny.)



The finished job - with the Ashchurch Apprentices assembling our 'spare' Acrow Bridge over the Lock approach. (David Penny)



ABOVE: The steel reinforcement almost complete on the Lock approach ready for the concrete pour. BELOW: The brickwork commences - an inner skin of blocks formed a shutter for reinforced concrete poured behind the brickwork. (David Penny)



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[not quite] The Last Page

PLAIN SAILING

The expertise and knowledge of our Members never ceases to amaze us - in the last edition, in **Restoration Update**, Nigel Bailey referred to the complexities of nautical terminology and suggested that **The Wharfinger** might publish a glossary. He specifically referred to "*mizzen topgallant staysail*" and I added a note "*We'll have some trouble with that last one*".

Within a few days of publication a Bristol Member wrote (*thank you*) with a detailed explanation of the different types of rigging - complete with complex diagrams - showing just where the mizzen topgallant staysail fits into the overall scheme of things. We hope that this will form an article for a future edition!

SOLICITING HELP

Our thanks to Martin Orchard, of Thorpes Solicitors in Hereford, for readily agreeing that we could use their document exchange service to transfer bulk supplies of **The Wharfinger** to Councils along the line of the Canal. The Councils' Member Services Officers assist us in distributing a copy of each edition

to their Councillors - thanks to Thorpes they are safely delivered in bulk at no cost to the Canal Trust.

SOCIAL CHANGES

As reported on the centre pages **The Verzons** was sold at the end of last year - too late for us to include details in the last edition. New owner David Roberts has been refurbishing the Hotel and it was necessary for us to find a temporary home for the January and February meetings. Our thanks to John Groutage, at the nearby **Hopton Arms**, for so readily agreeing to accommodate us.

The March meeting, an illustrated talk about the famous Settle & Carlisle Railway, will be at **Ashperton Village Hall**; we anticipate a great deal of interest in this topic so come early to secure your seats! As from the April meeting we revert to **The Verzons**.

GRAND HOLIDAY DRAW

It's our major annual fund-raising initiative; thanks to the prize donors and **MEB npower**® every single pound raised goes towards restoration of the H&G Canal. *Please support it!*



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WANT TO HELP ?

The Canal Trust is always in need of new volunteers as our activities continue to expand. We can normally find a use for any skill from chefs to first aiders, brickies to those willing to help with shovel or pen.

CONTACT ANYONE ABOVE

T O D A Y !

ADVERTISING IN THE WHARFINGER

Show the support of your business by advertising in **The Wharfinger**. Rates start at £12, there is a series discount, and we will gladly design your advertisement free of charge. *Cliff Penny has the details.*

VISIT OUR WEB SITE: - www.h-g-canal.org.uk

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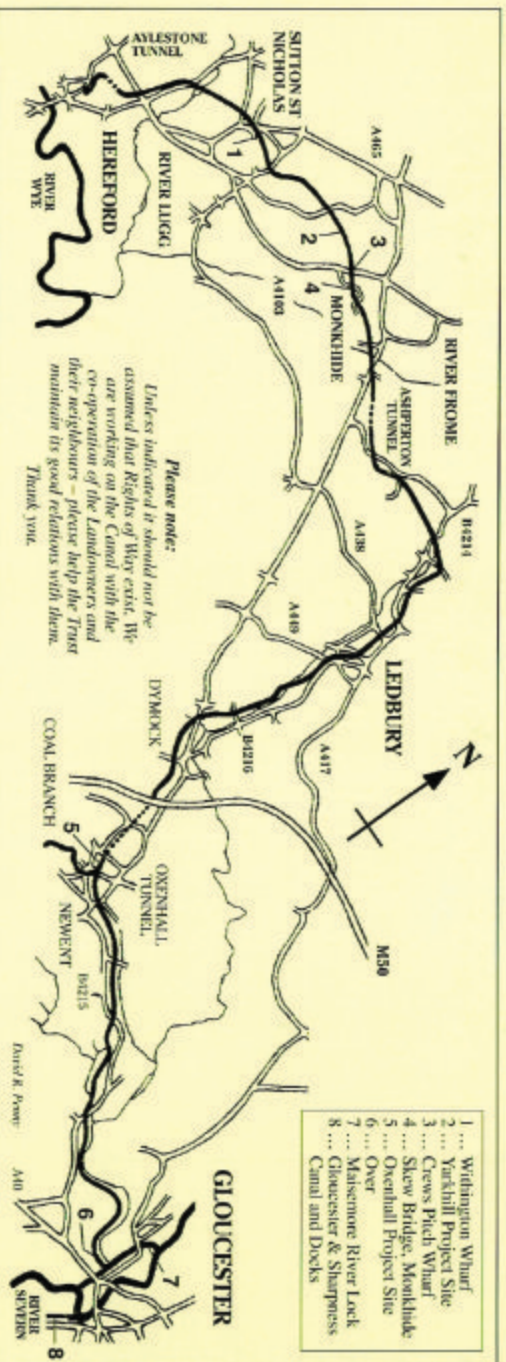
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THE HEREFORDSHIRE AND GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL



Work started in 1792 but was not completed until 1845, making this the last major route built in Britain, but for the navigations of Birmingham and the Manchester Ship Canal. The Canal stretched for 34 miles from the River Sever at Gloucester, via Newent, Dymock and Ledbury to the City of Hereford utilising some 22 locks and 3 tunnels. The Canal was formally closed in 1881 to allow construction of the Ledbury to Gloucester railway and this in its turn was closed by Dr Beeching in 1964.

The Canal Society was formed in 1983 and replaced in 1992 by the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust, a registered charity. The Trust has an ordinary and corporate membership exceeding 700 from all over the country – and abroad! Our objective is to fully restore the 34 mile Canal, from its connection with the 2,500 mile inland waterways network at Gloucester to the centre of Hereford. A Steering Committee of the Local Authorities, Environment Agency, etc. has been formed by the Trust to assist in progressing this objective. We have a major restoration site in each county, which together extend to some 3 miles.